

REMARKS

This application has been carefully considered in connection with the Examiner's Final Office Action dated August 17, 2009 and the Advisory Action dated October 29, 2009. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the following.

Summary of Rejections

Claims 1-31 were pending at the time of the Final Office Action.

Claims 1-13 and 24-31 were withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 14-17 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 USC § 102.

Claims 18-20 were rejected under 35 USC § 103.

Summary of Response

Claim 14 is currently amended herein.

Claims 15, 19, and 21 remain as originally submitted.

Claims 16-18, 20, and 22-23 were previously presented.

Claims 1-13 and 24-31 are canceled herein.

Claims 32-39 are newly added herein.

Remarks and Arguments are provided below.

Summary of Claims Pending

Claims 14-23 and 32-39 are currently pending following this response.

Response to Rejections

McConnell does not disclose performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation processes on the invoice data to generate a mediated output, wherein the mediated output is different from the invoice data. Furthermore, McConnell does not disclose registering data identifiers and mediation processes in a reference table where each data identifier corresponds to a mediation process. Automating the process of identifying which of the plurality of mediation processes should be performed on the invoice data by using the reference table and performing the mediation process on the invoice data to generate a mediated output enables a more efficient and less expensive system and method for processing data from several different sources.

Billing processing systems sometimes must accommodate billing data from several different sources in order to execute a subsequent processing operation. This sometimes presents a problem because first, multiple originating systems may generate billing data that is not uniform across all of the originating systems, and second, any request for processing the billing data in order to output or create a secondary type of invoice using the received billing data requires tremendous customization on a case-by case basis. Thus, the process of extracting data from multiple different systems and subsequently performing customized data processes becomes inefficient and expensive.

Accordingly, the pending application relates to a method for automating the process of identifying which mediation process from a plurality of data processes should be performed on the invoice data by using a reference table and performing the mediation process on the invoice data to generate a mediated output. The reference table comprises data identifiers and mediation processes, each data identifier registered to at

least one mediation process. Invoice data is associated with a data identifier such that when the invoice data is received, the reference table can be consulted to determine, based on the data identifier associated with the particular invoice data, which specific mediation process is to be applied to the particular invoice data. Each mediation process may perform a different data processing function on invoice data depending on the specified need. For example, a customer may have a need for and request the creation of a secondary invoice that tracks specific identified charges or tracks billing periods outside the normal billing period. Thus, the pending application discloses identifying particular invoice data that is associated with the customer, determining a mediation process to be performed on the particular invoice data using the data identifier associated with the particular invoice data and the reference table, and performing the mediation process on the particular invoice data in order to generate a mediated output (e.g., the secondary invoice requested by the customer).

With regard to the art rejections, the Office Action has cited McConnell et al., U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0074313 ("McConnell"). McConnell discloses a billing manager in a gateway of a network that routes messages in real time to a real time mediation device if the message relates to a pre-pay service or alternatively to a billing log for off-line processing. McConnell merely discloses that the billing manager routes or sends the same message it receives. Thus, McConnell does not disclose performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation processes (i.e., a data processing function) on the invoice data, let alone performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation process on the invoice data to generate a mediated output, wherein the mediated output *is different from* the invoice data. Also, while McConnell may disclose that each message

has a numeric identifier and an event linkage id, McConnell does not disclose that the numeric identifier or the event linkage id is in a reference table or that the numeric identifier or the event linkage id corresponds to a mediation process.

These distinctions, as well as others, will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis of the present claims that follows.

Response to Rejections under Section 102

Claim 14:

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by McConnell et al., U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0074313 ("McConnell").

I. McConnell does not disclose performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation processes on the invoice data to generate a mediated output, wherein the mediated output is different from the invoice data.

Amended claim 14 now recites "performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation processes on the invoice data to generate a mediated output, wherein the mediated output **is different from** the invoice data" (emphasis added). Also, amended claim 14 now recites "wherein each of the plurality of mediation processes performs a different data processing function." Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added and the support for the amendments may be found at least in paragraphs 0024 and 0025.

The Final Office Action does not address all of these limitations. However, the Final Office Action relied on paragraphs 0016-0024 of McConnell to disclose

“performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation processes on the invoice data to generate a mediated output.”

While paragraph 0054 of McConnell may disclose that “[w]ithin the gateway, messages may be routed in real time to a billing manager, such that the billing manager *processes the messages*” (emphasis added), Applicant respectfully submits that the billing manager “processes the messages” merely means that the billing manager routes the messages. For example, Applicant notes claims 1 and 3 of McConnell, which are reproduced below for convenience.

1. A method comprising: operating a gateway that routes signals between a client and a network server; receiving at the gateway billing data generated by an application on the server; and processing the billing data in the gateway.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said processing comprises: classifying the data as requiring real time processing or off-line processing; and routing the data according to a result of said classifying.

Furthermore, Applicant notes several paragraphs in McConnell which disclose that the billing manager in the gateway is merely routing messages to a real time mediation device or to a billing log. For example, paragraph 0016 of McConnell discloses that “[t]he Billing Manager may write the message (or some of its data) to the billing log 5 and/or can send it directly (in real time) to a real-time billing mediation device 7.” In another example, paragraph 0010 of McConnell discloses that “[a] billing manager in the gateway directs the messages in real time to a real time mediation device if they relate to a pre-pay service, or alternatively to a billing log for off-line processing.” In yet another example, paragraph 0054 of McConnell discloses that the billing manager within “[t]he gateway may route event messages to a billing log for off-line processing or

to a real time mediation device for real time processing.” Accordingly, McConnell discloses that a billing manager processes messages by merely routing the messages.

Applicant notes that Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary defines “route” as “to send.” Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the billing manager is merely sending messages, and not performing a mediation process on the message. In other words, routing a message is not equivalent to performing a data processing function on retrieved invoice data. Moreover, Applicant notes that McConnell discloses that the message that is transmitted to the gateway is the same message that the billing manager routes to the billing log or the real time mediation device. For example, paragraph 0010 of McConnell discloses, “The application generates *a message* for each of a number of events recognized according to the service being provided. *These messages* are transmitted to the gateway. A billing manager in the gateway directs *the messages* in real time to a real time mediation device if they relate to a pre-pay service, or alternatively to a billing log for off-line processing” (emphasis added). As such, Applicant respectfully submits that the billing manager in McConnell merely routing a message does not generate a mediated output that is different from the message transmitted to the billing manager in the first place. Accordingly, McConnell does not disclose performing the at least one of the plurality of mediation processes (i.e., a data processing function) on the invoice data *to generate a mediated output*, wherein the mediated output **is different from** the invoice data.

II. McConnell does not disclose registering data identifiers and mediation processes in a reference table where each data identifier corresponds to a mediation process.

Claim 14 recites “registering...a plurality of data identifiers and a plurality of mediation processes in a reference table...wherein each of the plurality of data identifiers is registered to correspond to at least one of the plurality of mediation processes.”

The Final Office Action relied on paragraphs [0018]-[0020] of McConnell to disclose these limitations. For convenience, paragraph 0020 of McConnell is reproduced below.

[0020] Multiple messages may be created for a single transaction. Each message has a numeric identifier, and all messages that relate to the same transaction are linked with a unique number, called the event linkage id (ELID). The ELID is used to ensure that all messages related to one transaction can be associated, for example during processing by a billing mediation device 6 or 7. The gateway manages the generation and allocation of ELIDs.

Paragraph 0020 of McConnell merely discloses that each message has a numeric identifier and an event linkage id. Applicant respectfully submits that McConnell does not disclose that the numeric identifier or the event linkage id is in a reference table, let alone that the numeric identifier or the event linkage id corresponds to a mediation process. Rather, McConnell discloses in paragraph 0020 that the numeric identifier merely identifies a particular message and the event linkage id merely identifies all messages related to the same transaction (i.e., all messages that are related to the same transaction have the same event linkage id). Accordingly, McConnell does not disclose registering data identifiers and mediation processes in a reference table where each data identifier corresponds to a mediation process.

For at least the reasons established above in sections I and II, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 14 is not anticipated by McConnell and respectfully requests allowance of this claim.

Claims Depending from Claim 14:

Claims 15-17 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(3) as being anticipated by McConnell.

Applicant notes that claims 32-39 are newly added. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added and the support for the amendments may be found at least paragraphs 0037-0039.

Dependent claims 15-17, 21-23, and 32-39 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 14 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. Accordingly, for at least the reasons established in sections I and II above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 15-17, 21-23, and 32-39 are not anticipated by McConnell and respectfully requests allowance of these claims.

Response to Rejections under Section 103

Claims Depending from Claim 14:

Claims 18-20 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McConnell.

Dependent claims 18-20 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 14 and incorporate all of the limitations thereof. Accordingly, for at least the reasons established in sections I and II above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 18-20

are not taught or suggested by McConnell and respectfully request allowance of these claims.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance for the reasons stated above. If the Examiner has any questions or comments or otherwise feels it would be helpful in expediting the application, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (972) 731-2288.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any further fees associated with any of the foregoing papers submitted herewith, or to credit any overpayment thereof, to Deposit Account No. 21-0765, Sprint.

Respectfully submitted,

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